

HOUSE BILL NO. 282

INTRODUCED BY C. YOUNKIN

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING THE OFFENSE OF VEHICULAR HOMICIDE;
5 PROVIDING FOR REVOCATION OF THE DRIVER'S LICENSE OF A PERSON CONVICTED OF VEHICULAR
6 HOMICIDE; ADDING VEHICULAR HOMICIDE TO THE HABITUAL TRAFFIC OFFENDER LAW; INCREASING
7 THE PUNISHMENT FOR A PERSON WHO DRIVES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS
8 OR DRIVES WITH ALCOHOL OR DRUGS IN THE PERSON'S SYSTEM IF THE PERSON HAS A PRIOR
9 CONVICTION FOR VEHICULAR HOMICIDE; SUBJECTING A PERSON CONVICTED OF VEHICULAR
10 HOMICIDE TO THE CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY ASSESSMENT, EDUCATION, AND TREATMENT LAW; AND
11 AMENDING SECTIONS 61-5-205, 61-8-714, 61-8-722, 61-8-731, 61-8-732, AND 61-11-203, MCA."

12

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

14

15 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Vehicular homicide.** (1) A person commits the offense of vehicular
16 homicide if the person causes the death of another human being with a motor vehicle, as defined in 61-1-102,
17 while:

18 (a) under the influence of alcohol, a dangerous drug, any other drug, or a combination of the three;

19 (b) the person's alcohol concentration, as shown by an analysis of the person's blood, breath, or urine,
20 is 0.08 or more;21 (c) the person's blood contains any measurable amount of a dangerous drug, as defined in 50-32-101,
22 as shown by an analysis of the person's blood or urine; or

23 (d) violating any other traffic law.

24 (2) Absolute liability, as referred to in 45-2-104, is imposed for the conduct described in this section.

25 (3) A person convicted of the offense of vehicular homicide shall be imprisoned in the state prison for
26 a term not to exceed 20 years or fined an amount not to exceed \$50,000, or both, except that if the person has
27 a prior conviction under 61-8-401, 61-8-406, or this section, the person shall be imprisoned in the state prison
28 for a term of not less than 5 years or more than 20 years, the first 5 years of which may not be suspended or
29 deferred, and may be fined an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

30 (4) A court may not defer imposition of a sentence under this section.

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2 **Section 2.** Section 61-5-205, MCA, is amended to read:

3 **"61-5-205. Mandatory revocation or suspension of license upon proper authority.** (1) The
4 department upon proper authority shall revoke the driver's license or the operating privilege of a driver upon
5 receiving a record of the driver's conviction of or forfeiture of bail not vacated for any of the following offenses,
6 when the conviction or forfeiture has become final:

7 (a) negligent homicide resulting from the operation of a motor vehicle;

8 (b) driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or any drug or a combination of alcohol
9 or drugs, except as provided in 61-5-208, or operation of a motor vehicle by a person with a blood alcohol
10 concentration of 0.10 or more;

11 (c) any felony in the commission of which a motor vehicle is used;

12 (d) failure to stop and render aid as required under the laws of this state in the event of a motor vehicle
13 accident resulting in the death or personal injury of another;

14 (e) perjury or the making of a false affidavit or statement under oath to the department under this
15 chapter or under any other law relating to the ownership or operation of motor vehicles;

16 (f) conviction or forfeiture of bail not vacated upon three charges of reckless driving committed within
17 a period of 12 months; ~~or~~

18 (g) negligent vehicular assault as defined in 45-5-205 involving a motor vehicle; or

19 (h) vehicular homicide as described in [section 1].

20 (2) The department upon proper authority shall suspend the driver's license or the operating privilege
21 of a driver upon receiving a record of the driver's conviction of or forfeiture of bail not vacated for a theft offense
22 under 45-6-301 when the conviction or forfeiture has become final if the theft consisted of theft of motor vehicle
23 fuel and a motor vehicle was used in the commission of the offense. The suspension must be for 30 days for
24 a first offense, 6 months for a second offense, and 1 year for a third or subsequent offense."
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26 **Section 3.** Section 61-8-714, MCA, is amended to read:

27 **"61-8-714. Penalty for driving under influence of alcohol or drugs -- first through third offense.**

28 (1) ~~A~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, a person
29 convicted of a violation of 61-8-401 shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 24 consecutive hours
30 or more than 6 months and shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500. The initial 24

1 hours of the imprisonment term must be served in the county jail and may not be served under home arrest. The
 2 mandatory imprisonment sentence may not be suspended unless the judge finds that the imposition of the
 3 imprisonment sentence will pose a risk to the defendant's physical or mental well-being. Except for the initial 24
 4 hours of the imprisonment term, notwithstanding 46-18-201(2), the imprisonment sentence may be suspended
 5 for a period of up to 1 year pending successful completion of court-ordered chemical dependency assessment,
 6 education, or treatment by the defendant.

7 (2) ~~On~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, upon
 8 a second conviction, the person shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$300 or more than \$500 and by
 9 imprisonment for not less than 7 days or more than 6 months. At least 48 hours of the imprisonment term must
 10 be served consecutively in the county jail and may not be served under home arrest. Three days of the
 11 imprisonment sentence may not be suspended unless the judge finds that the imposition of the imprisonment
 12 sentence will pose a risk to the defendant's physical or mental well-being. Except for the initial 3 days of the
 13 imprisonment term, notwithstanding 46-18-201(2), the imprisonment sentence may be suspended for a period
 14 of up to 1 year pending successful completion of a chemical dependency treatment program by the defendant.

15 (3) ~~On~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, upon
 16 ~~a the~~ third conviction, the person shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not less than 30 days or more
 17 than 1 year and by a fine of not less than \$500 or more than \$1,000. At least 48 hours of the imprisonment term
 18 must be served consecutively in the county jail and may not be served under home arrest. The imposition or
 19 execution of the first 10 days of the imprisonment sentence may not be suspended. The remainder of the
 20 imprisonment sentence may be suspended for a period of up to 1 year pending successful completion of a
 21 chemical dependency treatment program by the defendant."

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23 **Section 4.** Section 61-8-722, MCA, is amended to read:

24 **"61-8-722. Penalty for driving with excessive alcohol concentration -- first through third offense.**

25 (1) ~~A~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, a person
 26 convicted of a violation of 61-8-406 shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 10 days and shall be
 27 punished by a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500.

28 (2) ~~On~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, upon
 29 a second conviction of a violation of 61-8-406, the person shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than
 30 48 consecutive hours, to be served in the county jail and not on home arrest, or more than 30 days and by a fine

1 of not less than \$300 or more than \$500.

2 (3) ~~On~~ Except as provided in 61-8-731(1) for a person with a prior vehicular homicide conviction, upon
 3 a third conviction of a violation of 61-8-406, the person shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 48
 4 consecutive hours, to be served in the county jail and not on home arrest, or more than 6 months and by a fine
 5 of not less than \$500 or more than \$1,000."

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7 **Section 5.** Section 61-8-731, MCA, is amended to read:

8 **"61-8-731. Driving under influence of alcohol or drugs -- driving with excessive alcohol**
 9 **concentration -- penalty for fourth or subsequent offense -- penalty for first or subsequent offense by**
 10 **person with prior vehicular homicide conviction.** (1) On the fourth or subsequent conviction under 61-8-714
 11 or 61-8-722 for a violation of 61-8-401 or 61-8-406 or upon a conviction for a violation of 61-8-401 or 61-8-406
 12 of a person who has a prior conviction of vehicular homicide under [section 1(1)(a) through (1)(c)], the person
 13 is guilty of a felony and shall be punished by:

14 (a) sentencing the person to the department of corrections for placement in an appropriate correctional
 15 facility or program for a term of 13 months. The court shall order that if the person successfully completes a
 16 residential alcohol treatment program operated or approved by the department of corrections, the remainder of
 17 the 13-month sentence must be served on probation. The imposition or execution of the 13-month sentence may
 18 not be deferred or suspended, and the person is not eligible for parole.

19 (b) sentencing the person to either the department of corrections or the Montana state prison or
 20 Montana women's prison for a term of not more than 5 years, all of which must be suspended, to run
 21 consecutively to the term imposed under subsection (1)(a); and

22 (c) a fine in an amount of not less than \$1,000 or more than \$10,000.

23 (2) The department of corrections may place an offender sentenced under subsection (1)(a) in a
 24 residential alcohol treatment program operated or approved by the department of corrections or in a state prison.

25 (3) The court shall, as a condition of probation, order:

26 (a) that the person abide by the standard conditions of probation promulgated by the department of
 27 corrections;

28 (b) a person who is financially able to pay the costs of imprisonment, probation, and alcohol treatment
 29 under this section;

30 (c) that the person may not frequent an establishment where alcoholic beverages are served;

- 1 (d) that the person may not consume alcoholic beverages;
- 2 (e) that the person may not operate a motor vehicle unless authorized by the person's probation officer;
- 3 (f) that the person enter in and remain in an aftercare treatment program for the entirety of the
- 4 probationary period;
- 5 (g) that the person submit to random or routine drug and alcohol testing; and
- 6 (h) that if the person is permitted to operate a motor vehicle, the vehicle be equipped with an ignition
- 7 interlock system.

8 (4) The sentencing judge may impose upon the defendant any other reasonable restrictions or

9 conditions during the period of probation. Reasonable restrictions or conditions may include but are not limited

10 to:

- 11 (a) payment of a fine as provided in 46-18-231;
- 12 (b) payment of costs as provided in 46-18-232 and 46-18-233;
- 13 (c) payment of costs of court-appointed counsel as provided in 46-8-113;
- 14 (d) community service;
- 15 (e) any other reasonable restrictions or conditions considered necessary for rehabilitation or for the
- 16 protection of society; or
- 17 (f) any combination of the restrictions or conditions listed in subsections (4)(a) through (4)(e).

18 (5) Following initial placement of a defendant in a treatment facility under subsection (2), the department

19 of corrections may, at its discretion, place the offender in another facility or program.

20 (6) The provisions of 46-18-203, 46-23-1001 through 46-23-1005, 46-23-1011 through 46-23-1014, and

21 46-23-1031 apply to persons sentenced under this section."

22

23 **Section 6.** Section 61-8-732, MCA, is amended to read:

24 **"61-8-732. Driving under influence of alcohol or drugs -- driving with excessive alcohol**

25 **concentration -- vehicular homicide -- assessment, education, and treatment required.** (1) In addition to

26 the punishments provided in 61-8-714, 61-8-722, and 61-8-731, regardless of disposition, a defendant convicted

27 of a violation of 61-8-401, ~~or 61-8-406, or [section 1(1)(a) through (1)(c)]~~ shall complete:

- 28 (a) a chemical dependency assessment;
- 29 (b) a chemical dependency education course; and
- 30 (c) on a second or subsequent conviction ~~for a violation of 61-8-401 or 61-8-406, except a fourth or~~

1 subsequent conviction for which the defendant completes a residential alcohol treatment program under
2 61-8-731(2), or as required by subsection (8) of this section, chemical dependency treatment.

3 (2) The sentencing judge may, in the judge's discretion, require the defendant to complete the chemical
4 dependency assessment prior to sentencing the defendant. If the assessment is not ordered or completed before
5 sentencing, the judge shall order the chemical dependency assessment as part of the sentence.

6 (3) The chemical dependency assessment and the chemical dependency education course must be
7 completed at a treatment program approved by the department of public health and human services and must
8 be conducted by a licensed addiction counselor. The defendant may attend a treatment program of the
9 defendant's choice as long as the treatment services are provided by a licensed addiction counselor. The
10 defendant shall pay the cost of the assessment, the education course, and chemical dependency treatment.

11 (4) The assessment must describe the defendant's level of addiction, if any, and contain a
12 recommendation as to education, treatment, or both. A defendant who disagrees with the initial assessment
13 may, at the defendant's cost, obtain a second assessment provided by a licensed addiction counselor or a
14 program approved by the department of public health and human services.

15 (5) The treatment provided to the defendant at a treatment program must be at a level appropriate to
16 the defendant's alcohol or drug problem, or both, as determined by a licensed addiction counselor pursuant to
17 diagnosis and patient placement rules adopted by the department of public health and human services. Upon
18 determination, the court shall order the defendant's appropriate level of treatment. If more than one counselor
19 makes a determination as provided in this subsection, the court shall order an appropriate level of treatment
20 based upon the determination of one of the counselors.

21 (6) Each counselor providing education or treatment shall, at the commencement of the education or
22 treatment, notify the court that the defendant has been enrolled in a chemical dependency education course or
23 treatment program. If the defendant fails to attend the education course or treatment program, the counselor
24 shall notify the court of the failure.

25 (7) A court or counselor may not require attendance at a self-help program other than at an "open
26 meeting", as that term is defined by the self-help program. A defendant may voluntarily participate in self-help
27 programs.

28 (8) Chemical dependency treatment must be ordered for a first-time offender convicted of a violation
29 of 61-8-401, ~~or~~ 61-8-406, or [section 1(1)(a) through (1)(c)] upon a finding of chemical dependency made by a
30 licensed addiction counselor pursuant to diagnosis and patient placement rules adopted by the department of

1 public health and human services.

2 (9) (a) On a second or subsequent conviction, the treatment program provided for in subsection (5) must
3 be followed by monthly monitoring for a period of at least 1 year from the date of admission to the program.

4 (b) If a defendant fails to comply with the monitoring program imposed under subsection (9)(a), the court
5 shall revoke the suspended sentence, if any, impose any remaining portion of the suspended sentence, and may
6 include additional monthly monitoring for up to an additional 1 year.

7 (10) Notwithstanding 46-18-201(2), whenever a judge suspends a sentence imposed under 61-8-714
8 and orders the person to complete chemical dependency treatment under this section, the judge retains
9 jurisdiction to impose any suspended sentence for up to 1 year."

10

11 **Section 7.** Section 61-11-203, MCA, is amended to read:

12 **"61-11-203. Definitions.** As used in this part, the following definitions apply:

13 (1) "Conviction" means a finding of guilt by duly constituted judicial authority, a plea of guilty or nolo
14 contendere, or a forfeiture of bail, bond, or other security deposited to secure appearance by a person charged
15 with having committed any offense relating to the use or operation of a motor vehicle that is prohibited by law,
16 ordinance, or administrative order.

17 (2) "Driver in need of rehabilitation and improvement" means a person who within a 2-year period
18 accumulates 18 or more conviction points according to the schedule specified in subsection (3).

19 (3) "Habitual traffic offender" means any person who within a 3-year period accumulates 30 or more
20 conviction points according to the schedule specified in this subsection:

21 (a) deliberate homicide resulting from the operation of a motor vehicle, 15 points;

22 (b) mitigated deliberate homicide, negligent homicide resulting from operation of a motor vehicle,
23 vehicular homicide, or negligent vehicular assault, 12 points;

24 (c) any offense punishable as a felony under the motor vehicle laws of Montana or any felony in the
25 commission of which a motor vehicle is used, 12 points;

26 (d) driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotics or drugs of any kind or operation
27 of a motor vehicle by a person with alcohol concentration of 0.10 or more, 10 points;

28 (e) operating a motor vehicle while the license to do so has been suspended or revoked, 6 points;

29 (f) failure of the driver of a motor vehicle involved in an accident resulting in death or injury to any
30 person to stop at the scene of the accident and give the required information and assistance, as defined in

1 61-7-105, 8 points;

2 (g) willful failure of the driver involved in an accident resulting in property damage of \$250 to stop at the
3 scene of the accident and give the required information or failure to otherwise report an accident in violation of
4 the law, 4 points;

5 (h) reckless driving, 5 points;

6 (i) illegal drag racing or engaging in a speed contest in violation of the law, 5 points;

7 (j) any of the mandatory motor vehicle liability protection offenses under 61-6-301 and 61-6-302, 5
8 points;

9 (k) operating a motor vehicle without a license to do so, 2 points (this subsection (k) does not apply to
10 operating a motor vehicle within a period of 180 days from the date the license expired);

11 (l) speeding, except as provided in 61-8-725(2), 3 points;

12 (m) all other moving violations, 2 points.

13 (4) There may not be multiple application of cumulative points when two or more charges are filed
14 involving a single occurrence. If there are two or more convictions involving a single occurrence, only the number
15 of points for the specific conviction carrying the highest points is chargeable against that defendant.

16 (5) "License" means any type of license or permit to operate a motor vehicle.

17 (6) "Moving violation" means a violation of a traffic regulation of this state or another jurisdiction by a
18 person while operating a motor vehicle or in actual physical control of a motor vehicle upon a highway, as the
19 term is defined in 61-1-201.

20 (7) A traffic regulation includes any provision governing motor vehicle operation, equipment, safety, size,
21 weight, and load restrictions or driver licensing. A traffic regulation does not include provisions governing vehicle
22 registration or local parking."

23

24 **NEW SECTION. Section 8. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
25 integral part of Title 45, chapter 5, part 1, and the provisions of Title 45, chapter 5, part 1, apply to [section 1].

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- END -